CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Please cancel Claims 5, 6, 7, and 8, and amend allowed Claims 1-4, as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An image reading apparatus comprising:

a linear image sensor ~~adapted~~ to photoelectrically convert an optical image obtained by optically scanning an original sheet and read it in units of line;

an original sheet feeding unit ~~adapted~~ to feed the original sheet onto an original sheet glass plate;

a discrimination unit ~~adapted to~~ that operates, in a case where abnormal pixel data of two or more pixels are continuously obtained on a reading line of said linear image sensor by reading said original sheet glass plate through said linear image sensor, to discriminate that dirt is present on said original sheet glass plate or that there is an abnormality in said original sheet glass plate; and

a setting unit ~~adapted~~ to set, as a reading line, a line on which the maximum pixel number that the abnormal pixel data can continue being read is the least~~, as the reading line~~.

2. (Currently Amended) An image reading apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising a counting unit ~~adapted~~ to count the number of pixels affected by said dirt and said abnormality on the one line discriminated by said discrimination unit,

wherein said setting unit sets, as a reading line, the line on which the maximum pixel number that the abnormal pixel data can continue being read is the least

and or which the number of pixels affected by said dirt and said abnormality is the least~~, as the reading line~~.

3. (Currently Amended) An image reading apparatus comprising:

a linear image sensor ~~adapted~~ to photoelectrically convert an optical image obtained by optically scanning an original sheet and read it in units of line;

an original sheet feeding unit ~~adapted~~ to feed the original sheet onto an original sheet glass plate;

a discrimination unit ~~adapted to~~ that operates, in a case where abnormal pixel data of two or more pixels are continuously obtained on a reading line of said linear image sensor by reading said original sheet glass plate through said linear image sensor, to discriminate that dirt is present on said original sheet glass plate or that there is an abnormality in said original sheet glass plate;

a counting unit ~~adapted~~ to count the number of pixels affected by said dirt and said abnormality on the one line discriminated by said discrimination unit; and

a setting unit ~~adapted~~ to set, as a reading line, a line on which the number of pixels affected by said dirt and said abnormality counted by said counting unit is the least~~, as the reading line~~.

4. (Currently Amended) An image reading apparatus comprising:

a linear image sensor ~~adapted~~ to photoelectrically convert an optical image obtained by optically scanning an original sheet and read it in units of line;

an original sheet feeding unit ~~adapted~~ to feed the original sheet onto an original sheet glass plate;

a discrimination unit ~~adapted to~~ that operates, in a case where abnormal pixel data of two or more pixels are continuously obtained on a reading line of said linear image sensor by reading said original sheet glass plate through said linear image sensor, to discriminate that dirt is present on said original sheet glass plate or that there is an abnormality in said original sheet glass plate;

a counting unit ~~adapted~~ to count ~~the~~ a total number of pixels of ~~the~~ abnormal pixel data ~~making~~ caused by said dirt and said abnormality on the one line discriminated by said discrimination unit; and

a setting unit adapted to set, as a reading line, a line on which said total number of pixels counted by said counting unit is the least~~, as the reading line~~.

Claims 5.-8. (Cancelled)